

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action of December 9, 2009, rejects all pending and non-withdrawn claims 1-4, 6-18, and 20-22. In this Amendment in Reply, Applicant amends independent claims 1, 11, and 15. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of all pending claims in view of the remarks set forth below.

Claim Amendments - Claims 1, 11, and 15

Applicant amends independent claims 1, 11 and 15. Support for these amendments can be found throughout the specification as originally filed, for example, at FIG. 1-2 and pages 4-6.

No new matter is added by these amendments.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 11-17, and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Publ. No. 2004/0064512 to Arora et al. (“the Arora reference”). Claims 4, 10, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over the Arora reference and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 7,130,885 to Chandra (“the Chandra reference”). Claims 1, 11, and 15 are independent.

These rejections are rendered moot by the claim amendments above. However, Applicant does not concede the merits of these rejections.

Applicant's independent claims as amended are patentable over the cited references because the cited references, whether taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the recited elements. For example, the cited references do not disclose or suggest “identifying, by the computer system, stored fact information that is related to and external to the incoming electronic message such that subsequent analysis of the stored fact information provides an indication of how to route the incoming electronic message,” as recited in Applicant's independent claims.

Applicant's claimed subject matter relates to routing electronic messages (e.g., email messages) sent to a generic message account (e.g., help@example.com) based upon fact

information from a source that is external to the message. For example, assume that a sender transmits an email to help@example.com (an example generic message account). The computer system receiving the email may be capable of performing a variety of tasks in response to receiving the email (e.g., route email to support staff, perform automated operation, etc.). Per Applicant's claimed subject matter, the computer system can determine an appropriate task by identifying and retrieving previous email transmissions received from the sender (example external fact information) for subsequent analysis. For instance, the subsequent analysis of the retrieved email transmissions can indicate that the received email should be routed to a particular support engineer who has had success resolving the sender's previous inquiries. (*See spec.* at pp. 4-6, 13-15).

Applicant's claims bear out aspects of this example. For instance, Applicant's independent claims recite "receiving . . . an incoming electronic message addressed to a general message account not assigned to any specific user" and "identifying . . . stored fact information that is related to and external to the incoming electronic message such that subsequent analysis of the stored fact information provides an indication of how to route the incoming electronic message."

In contrast, the Arora reference is directed to "a distributed instant messaging system that uses a distributed index . . . to implement an instant messaging system in a group of participating peers." (Arora at Abstract). The Arora reference discusses that an incoming electronic message is distributed based on the message's content, not on "stored fact information that is related to and external to the incoming electronic message such that subsequent analysis of the stored fact information provides an indication of how to route the incoming electronic message," as recited in the independent claims. For instance, the Arora reference discloses that "keywords and subjects of interest may be registered in a distributed index, and when a content including the registered metadata appears on the network, all nodes that have registered for that content may be notified." (Arora at [0080]) (emphasis added). Arora does not retrieve stored fact information external to the message.

Furthermore, the Arora reference's discussion of "rendezvous peers" does not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed subject matter, contrary to how Arora is characterized throughout the Office Action. Instead, the Arora reference defines a rendezvous peer as a "peer that is designated to be a rendezvous point for discovering information about other peers, peer groups, services and pipes." (Arora at [0183]). The rendezvous peers disclosed in Arora merely serve requests for information about a peer network, and do not identify or retrieve stored fact information.

The Chandra reference does not cure the deficiencies of the Arora reference. The Chandra reference is distinct from Applicant's claimed subject matter in that it is directed to "a method for associating related electronic messages in computer storage." (Chandra at Abstract). Nowhere does the Chandra reference teach or suggest "identifying, by the computer system, stored fact information that is related to and external to the incoming electronic message such that subsequent analysis of the stored fact information provides an indication of how to route the incoming electronic message," as recited in Applicant's independent claims.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the cited references do not anticipate or render obvious Applicant's independent claims. As such, Applicant respectfully requests the rejection of independent claims 1, 11, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn, as well as the rejection of dependent claims 2-4, 6-10, 12-14, 16-18, and 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103.

Conclusion

Applicant submits that claims 1-4, 6-18, and 20-22 are in condition for allowance, and request that the Examiner issue a notice of allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this

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paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 8, 2010 _____

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